



TOWN OF CHATHAM

OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN

TOWN MANAGER

549 Main Street, Chatham, Massachusetts, 02633

508-945-5100



September 14, 2010

Theodore Streibert
Chairman
Capital Projects Review Committee

Dear Sam,

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Selectmen to request the assistance of the CPRC in representing the Town's interests as MassDOT's engineers advance the 25% design of the proposed Mitchell River Bridge toward bid documents. As you may know, at a recent Board meeting, Mr. Shoukry Elnahal, director of MassDOT's Accelerated Bridge Program, agreed to consult collaboratively with the Town, provided that such consultation not be conducted in a large-scale public forum of the type exemplified by the Board's normal weekly meetings, and provided that the basic engineering concepts shown in the 25% design and as endorsed by the Board at that meeting remain intact.

The Board proposes that the following items be subject to review by the CPRC:

1. Confirmation that dedicated bike lanes will be deleted and the bridge be narrowed accordingly from what is now shown
2. Due diligence by MassDOT in investigating alternatives to the currently proposed brown pigmented concrete motorway (proposed to simulate or recall today's wood planking)
 - a. the possibility/feasibility of wood plank veneer over the structural concrete motorway
 - b. the possibility/feasibility of cementitious planking over the structural concrete motorway
 - c. the possibility/feasibility of stamped concrete finish to simulate planking over the structural concrete motorway
 - d. if the alternatives above are not acceptable or feasible, to consider non-pigmented concrete for the structural motorway with no veneer or special finish
3. Due diligence by MassDOT in investigating a crash-tested wood rail for the motorway in lieu of the weathering steel railing currently shown

- a. If a wood railing system is chosen, consideration of continuing that system as a replacement for the galvanized steel railing now in place on the landward sides of the bridge.
4. Consideration of uncoursed rubble stone veneer on the structural concrete abutments in lieu of the squared coursed ashlar stone veneer currently shown
5. Materials proposed for the bridge controls shed

It would be the Board's expectation that the CPRC or a subcommittee of the CPRC would meet with representatives of MassDOT's engineering team and report those discussions to the Board of Selectmen in an advisory capacity for final endorsement by the Board. My expectation is that at least one such meeting with MassDOT would be required, with at least one follow-up meeting to review the consequences of the first. Under ordinary circumstances, without this consultative agreement, MassDOT would not plan to report its progress publically until the 75% design stage is reached.

I have had the opportunity to share the items listed above with Mr. Elnahal, with the understanding that until they were endorsed by my colleagues on the Board and assigned to the CPRC for review, they were strictly unofficial. With acceptance of the proposed charge by Board and the CPRC, these items become the official challenge our Town lays before Mr. Elnahal and his team. We understand that the forthcoming determination of the Interim Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places may have some effect on the nature of further design work or the process of collaboration. Nonetheless, it is my understanding that MassDOT, in an effort to use the Interim Keeper's review period productively to meet the Town's expectations for an aesthetically appropriate design, will attempt to have material ready for your review shortly after the Interim Keeper renders her decision.

Looking forward to your acceptance of this charge,



Len Sussman
Chairman
Chatham Board of Selectmen